

**COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015 - ALLOTMENTS  
WAITING LIST REGISTER**

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to update the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee on the actions that are being undertaken in response to duties placed on the Council under Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 which provides a legal framework that promotes and encourages community empowerment and participation in growing food.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee note the Allotments Waiting List Register update which reflects the duties placed on local authorities arising from Part 9– Allotments of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

**3.0 DETAIL**

- 3.1 The council's Business Continuity Committee on 16 April 2020 adopted Argyll and Bute's first Community Food Growing Strategy. The Strategy's vision is to encourage and enable people in our community, who wish to grow their own food, by providing information on potential community food growing spaces, advice and guidance.
- 3.2 Developing the strategy was a duty placed on the council by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, which requires each local authority to produce a food growing strategy. It also places a duty on the council to establish and maintain an allotments waiting list register and to produce an allotments report for the area each year.
- 3.4 At the time of preparing this report 147 individuals are included on the Register.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Number of Individuals on the waiting list - July 2023</b>
Bute and Cowal	47
Helensburgh & Lomond	65

Area	Number of Individuals on the waiting list - July 2023
Mid Argyll, Kintyre & the Islands	19
Oban Lorn & The Isles Area	16

- 3.5 Argyll and Bute Council has three allotment sites (as defined by the Act which are those on Local Authority land) one in Helensburgh and two in Rothesay. They are each managed by allotment associations, with no spaces currently available. Other Community Food Growing Spaces such as community gardens and schools exist within a number of mainland and island sites which are managed by local dedicated community members and school groups.
- 3.6 As the Council does not currently directly manage allotments, Legal and Regulatory Support Officers have established relationships with allotment sites and other land owners. With agreement from those that have submitted their details these are then passed to these independently managed sites in anticipation of securing land for the purposes of growing food.
- 3.7 In order to complement the Community Food Growing Strategy Legal and Regulatory Support provide a dedicated community growing spaces website, which can be accessed by following this [LINK](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-growing-spaces) (https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-growing-spaces). The website holds useful information relating to Community Empowerment, including allotment legislation and guidance for community groups who are interested in growing their own food.
- 3.5 Officers recently re-visited the community gardens in Lochgoilhead that featured in the Community Food Growing Strategy. The community have implemented a monumental amount of work from establishing growing species in raised bed, installing bee hives, planting trees, shrubs and perennials along with interpretation boards, storage facilities, a striking covered social space and access to the river walk. The Curling Pond and wetland area are doing well also. **Associated images can be found at appendix 1.**
- 3.8 The Partnerships Development Officer and the team who support Council Asset requests have received several expression of interest from individuals and groups regarding the use of council assets and land for community gardens and spaces for food growing. Some of this interest has reached a positive conclusion in terms of the establishment of a community growing space and the setting up of community groups to manage and run the community garden/ growing space. Officers are committed to giving advice and support to individuals' and groups to encouraging and enable people wishing to grow their own food.

- 3.9 The Council manages a demonstration garden in Hermitage Park. While this does not fall within the definition of an allotment in the traditional sense, it is used to give people, particularly schoolchildren, experience of food growing. Additionally, much of the food grown in the demonstration garden is available for the public to freely pick, for example last year many people helped themselves to strawberries with many patrons being gifted bags of produce to enjoy at home.
- 3.10 Currently a number of community groups and local businesses manage individual beds for food growing. This includes Alzheimers Scotland, Lockheed Martin (Volunteering in the Community), the Park Pavilion café, Hermitage Primary School, the Friends of Hermitage Park and the University of the Highlands and Islands.
- 3.11 As additional support for this and to improve local knowledge of food growing, a total of 15 horticulture themed workshops were delivered free to the community in 2022 as part of the Hermitage Park heritage-led Regeneration project.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The adoption of the Argyll and Bute Council Community Food Growing Strategy met the Council's duty under Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, officers continue to provide information to support and signpost individuals and community groups who wish to grow their own food.

#### **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Policy – None
- 5.2 Financial – None
- 5.3 Legal – Meeting our duty to produce a Food Growing Strategy, Allotment Waiting List and Rules and Regulations under Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- 5.4 HR – None
- 5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty – None
- 5.5.1 Equalities – None
- 5.5.2 Socio-Economic Duty – None
- 5.5.3 Islands Duty – None
- 5.6 Climate Change – None

5.7 Risk - Failure to report the Allotments Waiting List Register means we do not fulfil our duties placed on local authorities arising from Part 9 – Allotments of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

5.8 Customer Service - None

**Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support**

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